



Morning Alert - Friday, October 27, 2017

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HEADLINES

Morning news

NHK gave top play to a report on Typhoon Saora, which is approaching Japan. Most commercial networks led with reports on Nippon Professional Baseball's first amateur draft on Thursday in which the Nippon Ham Fighters won the rights to negotiate a contract with Kotaro Kiyomiya.

Top stories in national dailies included Kobe Steel's announcement that it has found four new cases of data fabrication (Asahi, Sankei); Education Ministry data showing a record 320,000 cases of school bullying in 2016 (Yomiuri); and listed companies' strong performance in the six-month period through September (Nikkei).

INTERNATIONAL

President Trump's Asia trip seen as touchstone of his commitment to the region

Nikkei wrote that attention is focused on how President Trump will address strengthening the coalition against North Korea and rectifying the trade imbalance during his first Asia trip. The paper wrote that Asian nations are becoming increasingly concerned about the Trump administration's strategy of linking security to trade based on its "America First" policy. The paper went on to say that the upcoming Asia tour by the President will become a touchstone for his commitment to Asia.

Abe to propose to President Trump quadrilateral dialogue with India, Australia

Mainichi wrote that Prime Minister Abe has decided to propose to President Trump during his visit to Japan starting on Nov. 5 the idea of setting up a strategic dialogue with India and Australia to discuss security and economic issues. The paper speculated that the idea is intended to counter China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative by strengthening the four nations' cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Meanwhile, Sankei wrote that the GOJ is making arrangements to take up Abe's idea of establishing "a free and open Indo-Pacific" for discussion at his upcoming talks with President Trump. Speculating that the two leaders will discuss their response to China in addition to North Korea, the paper conjectured that discussions by the U.S. and Japanese leaders on their strategies in the Indo-Pacific will send a message to China with regard to its increasing presence in the South and East China Seas.

Police conduct checks of vehicles at multiple places in Tokyo in preparation for POTUS visit

NHK reported this morning that the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) conducted checks of vehicles in several locations in Tokyo on Thursday evening ahead of President Trump's visit to Japan early next month. The network said the MPD is planning to deploy emergency response teams to the Kantei and the President's accommodations and will also step up patrols at major rail stations, water purifying plants, and electric power plants.

Japan, China to hold security dialogue

Mainichi, Yomiuri, and Nikkei wrote that MOFA announced on Thursday that China's Assistant Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou will visit Tokyo on Oct. 27-29 for a security dialogue with Senior Deputy Foreign Minister Akiba. This will be the first time for Japan and China to hold security talks at this level since last November. Nikkei wrote that the two nations will discuss such issues as when to launch their air and maritime communications mechanism.

Public-private group visits Northern Territories to explore joint economic activities

Mainichi and Yomiuri wrote that a public-private group engaged in studying possible joint economic activities on the Northern Territories departed for the disputed islands on Thursday. This is the second trip to the territories by the group, which will stay on the islands until Oct. 31. Prime Minister Abe and President Putin agreed in their talks in September to explore the possibility of economic cooperation in five priority areas, including aquaculture, greenhouse farming, and tourism.

Security screening to be tightened for U.S.-bound travelers

Thursday evening's Asahi front-paged a report on an announcement made by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration on Wednesday that additional security screening will be conducted for all international flights to the United States. According to the article, U.S.-bound passengers will be asked an additional set of questions by security personnel before boarding planes at airports. Enhanced security screening of carry-on baggage will also be implemented.

SECURITY

Defense Ministry confirms U.S. military's resumption of flight operations by CH-53Es

Asahi and Mainichi wrote that the Ministry of Defense on Thursday released a statement confirming the U.S. military's resumption on Oct. 18 of flight operations of CH-35E helicopters following the emergency landing that occurred in Higashi Village in Okinawa on Oct. 11. The statement said that although the U.S. side has not yet provided detailed explanations on the cause of the incident, it has taken reasonable steps to confirm flight safety. Mainichi wrote that although Defense Minister Onodera has stated that the cause of the accident should be determined before resuming flight operations, the ministry explained that the U.S. military has provided additional explanations about safety checks. However, Asahi wrote that Onodera's request was disregarded.

GOJ panel discusses measures against cyberattacks targeting 2020 Olympics

Asahi wrote that an experts' panel established by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to discuss measures against possible cyberattacks targeting the 2020 Tokyo Olympics held its first meeting on Thursday. The panel, whose members include NEC Corporation Chairman Endo, plans to put together draft measures by around December.

POLITICS

Post-election special Diet session to be convened on Nov. 1 to elect prime minister

All papers wrote that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga notified executives of both chambers of the Diet on Thursday that a special Diet session will be convened on Nov. 1 following the general election on Sunday. Following his reelection in both houses of the Diet on the first day of the session, Prime Minister Abe is expected to form a new cabinet.

POTUS-VISIT ITEMS FROM AFTERNOON ALERT

- **President Trump plans to work on North Korea issue during Asia tour** (NHK, Fuji TV)
- **Ginowan mayor hopes President Trump supports early return of Futenma** (NHK)

